

Claim Amendments:

1. (currently amended) A strip having a plurality of lamellae and a longitudinal axis, each said lamella being interconnected to the next by a first connecting element, each lamella comprising two opposing lamella legs on opposite sides of said longitudinal axis, each said lamella leg having at least one opening extending transversely to ~~the~~ said longitudinal axis ~~of the strip~~, said at least one opening in one of said two opposing lamella legs extending to a first point and said at least one opening in the other of said two opposing lamella legs extending to a second point, said first and second points being offset from one another relative to said longitudinal axis, so that at least one second connecting element ~~being~~ is formed in the area of ~~the~~ said longitudinal axis ~~of the strip~~ between ~~the~~ said openings in said opposing lamella legs ~~and~~ said at least one second connecting element being inclined relative to said longitudinal axis whereby ~~the~~ said second connecting element allows the strip to be compressed or extended relative to ~~the~~ said longitudinal axis.

2. (cancelled)

3. (previously presented) The strip according to claim 1, the second connecting element having edges inclined by an angle WO with respect to the longitudinal axis of the strip, the angle WO being in a range of 10° to 80°.

4. (previously presented) The strip according to any of claim 1 or claim 3, wherein the second connecting element overlaps the longitudinal axis of the strip and has the same shape in each lamella.

5. (previously presented) The strip according to any of claim 1 or claim 3, further comprising at least one cut-out extending from the edge of the strip to the first connecting element, the cut-out arranged between two lamellae adjacent along the longitudinal axis of the strip.

6. (previously presented) The strip according to any of claim 1 or claim 3, wherein the first connecting element overlaps the longitudinal axis of the strip and one cut-out is arranged symmetrically to and on both sides of the longitudinal axis in the transverse direction, which cut-out is a gap having parallel sides, the width of the gap being 1/10 to 1/20 of the length of the gap.

7. (previously presented) The strip according to claim 5 or 6, wherein each cut-out is V-shaped and widens outwardly from the first connecting element towards the edge of the strip.

8. (previously presented) The strip according to claim 7, wherein each cut-out is symmetrical with respect to a perpendicular axis to the longitudinal axis and encloses a gap having an angle $W1$ that is within the range of 2° to 30° from said perpendicular axis.

9. (previously presented) The strip according to claim 5 wherein each cut-out is rounded in the area of the first connecting element and forms an arc of a circle having a radius $R1$, the radius $R1$ being in the range of 0.2 to 1.5 mm.

10. (previously presented) The strip according to any of claim 1 or claim 3, wherein the

openings in the opposing lamella legs are mirror-inverted with respect to the perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the strip.

11. (previously presented) The strip according to any one of claim 1 or claim 3, wherein each opening comprises at least one first section and one adjoining second section, the first section expanding from the longitudinal axis of the strip towards the second section.

12. (previously presented) The strip according to claim 11, wherein the first section of the openings is triangular and has a first side extending towards the perpendicular to the longitudinal axis and a second side extending at an angle α with respect to the perpendicular, said angle being in the range of 10° to 80° .

13. (previously presented) The strip according to claim 12, wherein the second section includes sides that are perpendicular to the longitudinal axis and further comprising a third section that widens towards the edge of the strip and adjoins the second strip.

14. (previously presented) The strip according to claim 13, wherein the third section is V-shaped and is symmetrical about a perpendicular axis to the longitudinal axis and encloses an angle α which is in the range of 2° to 30° from said perpendicular axis.

15. (previously presented) The strip according to claim 13, wherein the opening comprises a fourth section and said section is spaced apart from the edge of the strip and rounded, and semicircular with a radius R_2 that is in the range of 0.5 to 5 mm.

16. (previously presented) The strip according to any of claim 1 or claim 3, wherein each lamella has a straight edge and corners which are rounded.

17. (previously presented) The strip according to any of claim 1 or claim 3, wherein each lamella has a width of 8 mm in the area of the edge and/or each cut-out has a width of 5.4 mm in the area of the edge and/or the strip has a width of 39 mm and/or the width of the first connecting element perpendicular to the longitudinal axis is 5 mm and/or the width of the recess is at least 2 mm and/or the width of the second connecting element in the direction of its extension is 1.2 mm, each of the aforementioned values being variable by $\pm 50\%$ and the aforementioned values being proportionally increasable and decreasable.

18. (previously presented) The strip according to any of claim 1 or claim 3, wherein the strip has a thickness d that is in the range of 0.1 to 2 mm.

19. (previously presented) The strip according to any of claim 1 or claim 3, wherein the strip is metal.

20. (previously presented) A skeleton strip having a U-shaped or V-shaped cross-section consisting of a strip according to any of claim 1 or claim 3, wherein said strip is bent out of the plane of the longitudinal axis.

22. (previously presented) A device for producing a strip according to any of claim 1 or

claim 3 characterized by a respective punching die.

23. (previously presented) A method for producing a strip according to any one of claim 1 or claim 3 comprising the steps of providing a strip which is made of metal and punching portions thereof to form said openings.

24. (previously presented) A strip according to claim 11, wherein the opening comprises a fourth section and said section is spaced apart from the edge of the strip and rounded, and semicircular with a radius R_2 that is in the range of 0.5 to 5 mm.

25. (previously presented) A strip according to claim 12, wherein the opening comprises a fourth section and said section is spaced apart from the edge of the strip and rounded, and semicircular with a radius R_2 that is in the range of 0.5 to 5 mm.